

them, or either of them, under the shall-
low justification that they are of no moral
force, violates the primary duties of citi-
zenship, and commits treason against his
government."

On the 20th of August, 1850, on the 5th
reading of the fugitive slave bill, which
was passed and is now a law, I said:

"The act of 1793, providing for the re-
stitution of fugitive slaves under the con-
stitution, would, in my judgment, have
answered the purposes for which it was de-
signed, if it had been fairly construed and
faithfully executed; and although we may
denote some defects which experience has
detected, and will be its force by prescrib-
ing, penalties for resisting its mandates,
yet as the whole difficulty has rested in a
neglect to comply with a plain provision of
the constitution, the remedy will be sooner
found, if sought, in cultivating a sound
state of public feeling and constitutional
obligation among the people of the free
States."

"In entering into a common compact,
the several States of the Union solemnly
concentrated with each other to restore fu-
gitives from justice and from service, and
these provisions are too plainly written in
the constitution to be mistaken or disre-
garded with impunity."

After citing each branch of the article, I
said:

"In both cases the fugitive is to be 'de-
livered up,' unconditionally, upon proper evi-
dence; and in neither case, nor in either
than the other, is he to be put upon trial in
the State to which he has fled, nor can
Congress do more than to provide that he
shall be 'delivered up.' The theory of the
compact is, that the fugitive will be
justly dealt with in the jurisdiction to which
he is returned. It was asserted to be this
in the original spirit, and I have yet to learn
that the practice has departed from it."

These opinions have been confirmed by
subsequent experience, and I am prepared
under all circumstances, whenever and
wherever my action shall be required,
to resist any attempt to disturb or change
the provisions of the existing law as to re-
duce it beneath the constitutional standard,
and thus render it less effectual for sec-
uring to the people of the South their con-
stituted rights. It would clearly be the
duty of the Executive, under these circum-
stances, to resist such attempt by interpos-
ing his veto; and should it ever be my
fortune to be clothed with such authority,
and the occasion should arise, it would
most surely be exercised."

If you believe the publication of this
hasty letter at this time will advance the
interests of the democratic party, it is at
your service accordingly; otherwise, for
reasons heretofore stated, I should pre-
fer not to claim for myself in this respect
the consideration of the public.

I have the honor to be, with high regard,
yours, &c.,

D. S. DICKINSON.

Letter from George M. Dallas, Esq.

MAY 23, 1852.

DEAR SIR: Your letter of the 17th
inst. reached me by the post this morn-
ing, and the very kind terms which
you are good enough to apply to my
conduct and character as a public man
impose upon me the duty of replying
at once with candor and explicitness.

Although the contingency on which
your inquiries are based be not one re-
garded by me, as at all likely to occur
—as one which, in sober truth, I have
thought it just and wise in myself
rather to shun than to seek yet, my
high personal respect for yourself, and
my discrimination to seem for an in-
stant to suppress my untried opinions
on the greatest of national questions,
oblige me to adopt your supposition so
that I may answer exactly to what is
propounded:

"Should you be nominated by the
convention, and elected to the presi-
dency by the people, in your adminis-
tration of the government would you
sustain and by every means within
your power enforce and have executed
in all their parts, the various acts of
Congress, constituting what is known
as the Compromise, and especially the
enactments of that law relating to the
recapture by their owners of fugitive
slaves? And again, whether, should
you be elected President of the United
States, you would discontinue, by
every proper means, all attempts to
disturb or change the provisions of
that law, whereby those provisions
might be made less effectual for sec-
uring to the people of the South their
constitutional rights in the possession
and enjoyment of their slave property?

And should, unfortunately, a bill be
passed by Congress modifying or chang-
ing the law referred to, so as to im-
pair its present valuable enactments,
would you, as President of the repub-
lic, veto any such bill?"

To each and all of these interroga-
tories, I give you the only answer
which my mind reconciles with a sense
of executive duty—the only answer
which can assure the rights and peace
of the States and the permanency of
their Union; the only answer which a
Chief Magistrate, were he about to
swear that he will support the Constitu-
tion could give: I mean a sincere,
positive, unequivocal, "Yes, I would!"
I give you this answer the more deci-
dedly because it is not the birth of the
moment, but conforms with sentiments
which I have long entertained and ope-
nly avowed; which I have no desire
to conceal or to qualify on any occa-
sion or for any purpose; and which,
in my humble but firm judgment, if
our noble and beneficent structure of
government is to be preserved, must
animate the breasts and regulate the
conduct of all its functionaries from
the highest to the humblest.

I have the honor to be, dear sir, truly
and respectfully yours,

G. M. DALLAS.

To ROBERT G. SCOTT, Esq.

Letter from W. L. Marcy, Esq.

ALBANY, May 23, 1852.

SIR: I have received your letter of
the 17th inst., and hope the following
general statement of my views will be
deemed a satisfactory response to the
questions therein submitted to me:

I was in favor of the compromise
measures, including that for the return
of fugitive slaves, and concurred in
the sentiment of congratulation so gen-
erally entertained by the democratic
party in this State, as well as in others,
at the settlement by Congress, in this
mode, of the questions which then so

deeply agitated the country. The mea-
sures have answered the main end for
which they were designed—agitation
has almost entirely ceased, and the
public mind has become comparatively
tranquil.

If in an official station, I should feel
bound to use all the power which for
that purpose belonged to it, to enforce
the faithful execution of all the provi-
sions of these several measures.

I regard an acquiescence in this ad-
justment in all its parts as an impera-
tive duty, and should exceedingly re-
gret any endeavor to disturb it.

Viewing the subject in this light,
should an attempt be made to change
or modify these measures, in whole or
in part, so as to impair the constitu-
tional rights thereby secured to any
section of the country, or to render
less effectual the protection of those
rights, I should not only discontinue
the proceeding, but, in whatever station
I might be, should use my influence
and authority to resist and defeat it.

I am, with great respect, yours,

W. L. MARCY.

ROBERT G. SCOTT, Esq.

Letter from General Wool.

TRIO, (New York,) May 24, 1852.

SIR: At the moment of leaving
Washington for my headquarters in this
city, I received your communica-
tion of the 17th instant, relating to
the nominations to be made by the
convention which is to be assembled
in a few days at Baltimore.

It is true, my name has been associ-
ated with the nomination for the
presidency, but without solicitation or
agency on my part. Holding, as I do,
that the office is "neither to be sought
nor declined," I have not urged my
friends to present my name to the pub-
lic, nor have I arrayed myself in op-
position to any of the distinguished
men who have been named for that
exalted station. On the contrary, so
far as I am individually concerned or
interested, I would prefer that either
of them should be nominated rather
than myself; for I assure you, I have
no desire to enter another and a new
field, where it is probable I would be
compelled to encounter all the baser
passions of the human heart.

With these views, and not realizing
that I can obtain the nomination, it
only remains for me, in reply to your
requirement, to express the wish, that
whenever the convention nominates
for the presidency, he may be a per-
son of exalted views, possessing great
practical wisdom, well acquainted with
the affairs of the country and of na-
tions, at the same time free from all
sectional feeling. In other words, that
he will neither be a northern, south-
ern, eastern, or western man, but a
man for the Union, who will devote
all his talents and energy to the main-
tenance of the constitution and carry-
ing out faithfully all its provisions, and
to the preservation of the Union. We
are a nation composed of States, or
sovereignities, with diversified interests.
It ought not to surprise us if these
should occasionally clash. In such a
case, it should be the duty, the imperi-
ous duty, of the President to do all
in his power to promote conciliation
and harmony, and to prevent those
heartburnings and contentions between
the States or parts which, if encour-
aged, would do more than all else to
destroy the harmony of our glorious
Union. A more important duty than
this belongs not to the President, and
one which he should never for a mo-
ment lose sight of.

In conclusion, allow me to say, that
in a long public career, in peace as well
as in war, my aspirations have never
induced me to look beyond the good
opinion of my countrymen, which, I
assure you, I consider far more pre-
cious than office.

I am, very respectfully,

JOHN E. WOOL.

ROBERT G. SCOTT, Esq., Richmond,

Letter from Sam Houston, Esq.

WILLARD'S HOTEL, Washington City,

20th May, 1852.

SIR: Your letter of the 17th (post-
marked 18th instant) reached me this
morning, in which you address to me se-
veral inquiries. I feel no hesitancy in say-
ing what my opinions are on the various
points presented.

My course on the subject of the bills
which constitute the Compromise, prior to
and at the time they became laws, would
seem to supersede the necessity of any fur-
ther answer than to say, I voted for each
and every separate measure!

When I voted for these measures I re-
garded them, and still regard them, as a
final adjustment of all the questions which
they embraced. I further regarded them
as constitutional, and deserving the strict-
est adherence to the principles they con-
tain. Such were my views and opinions
when acting under the official duty en-
forced by an oath. I have seen no reason
to change them, but desire to see them
executed as a whole, and maintained in their
full and entire extent, whether I occupy a
private or an official station.

After having, as I believe, answered
your two first interrogatories, it only re-
mains for me to say, if I should be placed
in a position, by the will of the American
people, where it would be rendered neces-
sary for me to act in the contingency pre-
sented, I would not hesitate to "veto any
bill" impairing the law for the protection
of "the constitutional rights" which guar-
anty to the people of the South "the pos-
session and enjoyment of their slave prop-
erty."

You are at liberty to use this letter as
you may deem proper; for in this matter,
as well as all others which concern the
national weal, I hold no concealed opinions.

I am, truly, your obedient servant,

SAM HOUSTON.

ROBERT G. SCOTT, Esq.

Letter from Thos. J. Rusk, Esq.

WASHINGTON, May 21, 1852.

SIR: I have received your letter of the
17th instant, in which you propounded cer-
tain interrogatories respecting what are
termed the "compromise" acts, passed by
Congress, and especially the law authoriz-
ing the recovery of fugitive slaves.

In answer to the questions submitted by
you, I do not hesitate to say, that I think
it would be bad policy to disturb the pro-
visions of the law referred to, and ex-
tremely dangerous to the safety of the

Union to repeal, or even attempt to repeal,
the law relating to the recovery of fugi-
tive slaves. The right to recover their
slave property is plainly guaranteed to the
southern States by the constitution, and,
being essential to their existence, can nev-
er be abandoned by them. The mere agi-
tation of the slavery question has a ten-
dency to excite and imber the feelings
of those who compose our national coun-
cils, retard our prosperity as a nation by
creating sectional prejudices, and may, I
fear, if permitted to go on in connexion
with our presidential elections, lead to a
dissolution of the federal government. I
for one, shall lose confidence in the stabi-
lity of our Union from the day upon which
the fugitive law shall have been repealed,
or rendered inefficient by any action of
Congress; and I should regard any Pres-
ident as morally a traitor who would give
his approval to any enactment impairing any
of the provisions of the federal constitu-
tion.

I think any candid man who is familiar
with the history of the slavery agitation
will at once admit that it is kept up mainly
by a view to personal political elevation.
Demagogues, in view of the fact that the
non-slaveholding States have a majority of
the voting population, keep up the agita-
tion for the purpose of producing a state of
feeling which shall secure to one section
all the offices and patronage of the gen-
eral government.

My opinion is that at the North, as well
as at the South, there is a majority of con-
servative and patriotic men, who desire to
see this contest terminated and the consti-
tutional rights of all parties honestly re-
spected. Many noble examples of self-
sacrificing patriotism exhibited themselves
at the North during the struggle which ter-
minated in the enactment of the "compromi-
se measures." For this admission, I am
glad that they deemed right these gentlemen
have been assailed with a fend-like malig-
nity at home, and I regret to say it, have
not been sustained as they deserved to be
by the South. I believe the time has ar-
rived when it is due to the best interests
of the country that men should speak out
and wear no masks. If we are to have
peace and protection to our rights, it is
time we should know it. Every man who
aspires to political station should show his
hand boldly. If an honest determination
to maintain the constitution in all its pro-
visions against sectional demagogues, who
are prompted to action solely by the hope
of political power, is to become a disquali-
fication for federal office, the sooner it is
known the better.

The man who has not sense enough to
see that the agitation on the subject of
slavery is rapidly leading to the most dan-
gerous consequences, or who, seeing this,
has not honesty and courage enough to set
his face against it, at the risk of defeat, can
never receive my vote.

In conclusion, I desire to say that I am
not a candidate for the presidency; the
honors are of a doubtful and fleeting char-
acter—the duties and responsibilities be-
yond my capacity to perform.

I have, on a former occasion, expressed
openly, and upon due deliberation, my
preference for one of the gentlemen spoken
of in connexion with the presidency; and,
as a delegate to the Baltimore Con-
vention, under the expressed wishes of my
State, I mean to do fairly whatever may
be in my power to secure his nomination.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient
servant,

THOS. J. RUSK.

ROBERT G. SCOTT, Esq.

Letter from Linn Boyd, Esq.

WASHINGTON, May 20, 1852.

SIR: Your letter of the 17th instant is
before me, in which, after assuming that I
am a candidate for the presidency, you pro-
ceed, in substance, to inquire whether, if
elected to that office, I would endeavor to
maintain and execute the series of mea-
sures passed by the last Congress, known
as the "Compromise," and, especially,
whether I would veto any bill passed by
Congress to repeal, or in any way change,
the existing fugitive-slave law, as to
weaken its efficiency as a means of secur-
ing to the southern people the right, un-
der the constitution, to secure their slaves
escaping to other States.

These are certainly very important ques-
tions—to each and all of which I hope ev-
ery candidate for presidential honors will
give an explicit affirmative answer. The
public necessity which induces the adoption
of those measures may be appealed to with
even greater force than the duty of their main-
tenance and faithful execution.

In assuming, however, that I am a
candidate for the presidency, it is proper, for
me to say you greatly mistake my position.
I certainly am not a candidate, nor can I
readily conceive a state of things in which
any such use of my name is likely to be
made in connection.

I have the honor to be, most respect-
fully, your obd't serv't,

LYNN BOYD.

R. G. SCOTT, Esq.

Letter from General Joseph Lane.

WASHINGTON, May 21, 1852.

SIR: The letter you did me the honor to
address me, of the 17th inst., is received.
If my name is before the people for the
first office in their gift, it has been by their
action, and not mine. I neither solicit po-
litical preferment nor shrink from duty,
nor have I any concealments, but acknowl-
edge the right that the slave law, which
elevates me to a place of high trust to know
my political opinions.

You inquire: "Should you be nomi-
nated by the Convention, and elected to the
presidency by the people, in your adminis-
tration of the government will you sus-
tain, and by any means within your power
enforce and have executed in all their parts,
the various acts of Congress, constituting
what is known as the Compromise, and es-
pecially the enactments of that law relating
to the recapture by their owners of fugi-
tive slaves?" I answer unhesitatingly,
Yes.

I presume you allude to the fugitive-
slave law "especially," because it is now
the only measure of the series to which
there appears to be any serious opposi-
tion, or indeed it is the only one with a
single other exception, susceptible of alter-
ation or repeal. The subject of the ren-
dition of fugitive slaves was an obstacle at
the period of the formation of the constitu-
tion. The recognition of the power to re-
claim them was a pre-requisite to the es-
tablishment of the Union, and was, in
an existing "Compromise" embodied into
the federal constitution itself, and making
a part of it. The laws of 1793 and 1850
are but legal enactments to carry it into
effect. You inquire again: "Whether,
should you be elected President of the U-
nited States, you would discontinue, by
every proper means, all attempts to dis-
turb or change the provisions of that law,
whereby those provisions might be made
less effectual for securing to the South
their constitutional rights in the possession
and enjoyment of their slave property; and
should, unfortunately, a bill be passed by

Congress modifying or changing the law
referred to, so as to impair its present val-
uable enactments, would you, as President
of the republic, veto any such bill?"

Without entering into the inquiry, or
making the assertion, yet it is possible that
the details of the fugitive slave law
are defective, even to carry out the in-
tention of its friends; but, because it was an
important feature in a compromise, and
now the only part of a practical character,
that is susceptible of modification or repeal,
and, above all, because I would deprecate
and deplore a renewal of agitation upon
that dangerous question, I would feel it
my duty to resist all attempts to re-open
that subject of legislation; and if, as Presi-
dent of the United States, a bill "should,
unfortunately, be passed by Congress mod-
ifying or changing the law referred to, so
as to impair its present valuable enact-
ments," I should promptly veto it.

In conclusion, allow me to add, how-
ever, that my opposition to interference, ex-
ecutive or legislative, on the part of the
federal government, concerning the insti-
tution of slavery, further than to carry out
the compromises of the constitution on
that subject, did not commence with either
the conception or passage of the measures
embraced in the "Compromise" to which
you allude, but is general in its character,
and of a date coeval with my earliest en-
trance into public life, (not now a short
one,) as the journals of the legislature of
Indiana will testify. The events of the
last three years have but tended to re-
open into a settled conviction an opinion long
entertained, that if the subject of slavery is
allowed to enter the halls of Congress, and
form an element in the general policy of
the country, sooner or later, prove fatal
to the peace, harmony, and integrity
of the Union.

I am, sir, with great respect,
your obedient servant,

JOSEPH LANE.

ROBERT G. SCOTT, Esq.

Letter from R. F. Stockton, Esq.

SENATE CHAMBER, Washington,

May 20, 1852.

SIR: I have this morning received your
letter, post marked Richmond, 19th May
1852. I thank you for the compliment of
considering my opinions of any importance.
I have no hesitation in replying to each and
all of your interrogatories affirmatively.

My views in relation to those questions
will fully appear from my letter to the Hon.
Daniel Webster, of the 25th of March,
1850, and also from my speech of the 4th
of July, at Elizabethtown, N. J., of the
same year, copies of which are herewith
enclosed.

This answer to your enquiries is given,
however, in no expectation of the event an-
ticipated by you. I am not a candidate
for the presidency. I will not be such by
my own seeking. I hope the democratic
party will cordially unite on one of those
distinguished statesmen whose names will
probably be submitted to the Democratic
National Convention.

Your obedient servant,

R. F. STOCKTON.

ROBERT G. SCOTT, Esq.

LETTER FROM HON. B. D. NABERS.

WASHINGTON CITY, June 7, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR:

Allow me to congratulate
you on the auspicious results of our
deliberations at Baltimore. Each State
and I may say, every man had his
choice and urged it with considerable
zeal; but when the choice was finally
made, everybody yielded with a hearty
good will. I am satisfied.

You will see that our platform is the
very thing we needed. When that
part of it which relates to the Com-
promise was read, there went up from
the multitude such a shout as I never
heard before. Maine and California
met and shook hands over this truly
national platform. Standing upon it
we pledged to each other good faith,
and swore eternal fidelity to the rights
of the States and the union of the
States. To me the occasion was one
of thrilling interest. I was happy, I
am so now. I felt in the results of our
convention renewed confidence in the
stability of our government and in the
patriotism of our people.

Of our candidates I will merely say
they are everything we need. Of our
principles, always more important than
men, they are all we desire.

We can now enter the canvass with
pleasure. For myself—I go for the
measures and the men with the utmost
pleasure.

Yours and everybody's
with sincerity,

B. D. NABERS.

W. R. COLE, Esq.

Pierce to Claiborne.

Six months ago, Colonel Claiborne, Editor
of the Louisiana Courier, suggested the
name of Gen. Pierce in connection
with the Presidency, one which would be
well received by the Democracy of the na-
tion. In acknowledgement, he received
from General Pierce the following letter:

CONCORD, N. H., May 17, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR: I had seen the generous
and complimentary remarks originally
published in the New Orleans Courier, and
copied into several papers in this State, as
early, I think, as February, but it was not
until I received the Courier under the
frank of Senator McKee, about the 20th
March, that I had the first intimation
of the friend to whom I was indebted. I
wrote immediately to Col. McKee for your
address, (not knowing that you were re-
siding in New Orleans,) but he having left
Washington, my letter followed him to
Mississippi, and it was not until yesterday
I received an answer. The delicate and
flattering tribute from that influential pa-
per was highly gratifying, (notwithstand-
ing my refusal to be a candidate,) and
doubtless so when I ascertained its source.

With the exception of the year I was in
the army, I have been wholly devoted to
my profession, mingling but little in politics,
unless when the activity and recklessness of
the dangerous element of abolitionism has
demanded the best exertions of a true man.

Pray write me all that concerns your
soul, and come in the summer and visit our
mountains, farm-houses and battle fields.

Very sincerely your friend,

FRANK PIERCE.

Col. J. F. H. CLAIBORNE.

The Hon. Isaac Reid has been
elected to Congress from the 4th Con-
gressional district of Maine, in place
of the Hon. Mr. Andrews, deceased.

Horstert is the best policy.

Congress modifying or changing the law
referred to, so as to impair its present val-
uable enactments, would you, as President
of the republic, veto any such bill?"

Without entering into the inquiry, or
making the assertion, yet it is possible that
the details of the fugitive slave law
are defective, even to carry out the in-
tention of its friends; but, because it was an
important feature in a compromise, and
now the only part of a practical character,
that is susceptible of modification or repeal,
and, above all, because I would deprecate
and deplore a renewal of agitation upon
that dangerous question, I would feel it
my duty to resist all attempts to re-open
that subject of legislation; and if, as Presi-
dent of the United States, a bill "should,
unfortunately, be passed by Congress mod-
ifying or changing the law referred to, so
as to impair its present valuable enact-
ments," I should promptly veto it.

In conclusion, allow me to add, how-
ever, that my opposition to interference, ex-
ecutive or legislative, on the part of the
federal government, concerning the insti-
tution of slavery, further than to carry out
the compromises of the constitution on
that subject, did not commence with either
the conception or passage of the measures
embraced in the "Compromise" to which
you allude, but is general in its character,
and of a date coeval with my earliest en-
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